

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): An iron-based sintered body with a rustproof function, characterized in comprising a layer containing 0.01 to 5at% of indium on the surface of the iron-based sintered body.

Claim 2 (canceled).

Claim 3 (previously presented): A manufacturing method of an iron-based sintered body having iron as its principal component, characterized in that sintering is performed in a gas atmosphere containing indium vapor or indium.

Claim 4 (new): A method according to claim 3, wherein, during said sintering, the iron-based sintered body is provided with a rustproof outer surface containing 0.01 to 5at% of indium.

Claim 5 (new): A method according to claim 4, wherein said sintering is performed in a furnace under a hydrogen gas atmosphere.

Claim 6 (new): A method according to claim 5, wherein the furnace is a batch type atmospheric furnace and said sintering is performed to the iron-based body at a sintering temperature of 1150°C for 60 minutes.

Claim 7 (new): A method according to claim 5, wherein, during said sintering, indium vapor is introduced into the furnace.

Claim 8 (new): A method according to claim 5, wherein, during said sintering, a compound that contains indium and that decomposes with the heat of sintering is introduced into the furnace.

Claim 9 (new): A method according to claim 8, wherein the compound is indium suboxide (In_2O).

Claim 10 (new): A method according to claim 3, further comprising the steps of mixing graphite powder with iron powder to form a powder mixture consisting essentially of iron and graphite and molding the mixture into said iron-based body, and then thereafter, performing said sintering step to said iron-based body.

Claim 11 (new): A method according to claim 3, further comprising the steps of mixing graphite powder with iron powder and a metallic soap to form a powder mixture consisting essentially of iron, graphite and metallic soap, and molding the mixture into said iron-based body, and then thereafter, performing said sintering step to said iron-based body.

Claim 12 (new): An iron-based sintered body, comprising a sintered body having iron as its principal component and having an outer surface, said outer surface containing 0.01 to 5at% of indium to provide said sintered body with a rustproof outer surface.

Claim 13 (new): An iron-based sintered body according to claim 12, wherein, except for said indium on said outer surface, said sintered body consists essentially of iron and graphite.

Claim 14 (new): An iron-based sintered body according to claim 12, wherein, except for said indium on said outer surface, said sintered body consists essentially of iron, graphite and a metallic soap.

Claim 15 (new): An iron-based sintered body according to claim 14, wherein said metallic soap is selected from the group consisting of metallic soap stearate, metallic soap propionate, and metallic soap naphenate.

Claim 16 (new): An iron-based sintered body according to claim 14, wherein said metallic soap is selected from the group consisting of zinc stearate, indium stearate, bismuth stearate, nickel stearate, cobalt stearate, copper stearate, and manganese stearate.